

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for drying ceramic molded articles, comprising a drying chamber for accommodating the ceramic molded articles, a plurality of microwave generators for supplying microwave energy in the frequency range of 300 MHz to 300 GHz into said drying chamber, ~~and~~ a conveyor for charging said ceramic molded articles continuously into said drying chamber, conveying said ceramic molded articles through said drying chamber and delivering said ceramic molded articles from said drying chamber, and a plurality of rests each adapted to receive a ceramic molded article and be conveyed by the conveyor through said drying chamber,

wherein said drying chamber has arranged therein said plurality of ~~said~~ microwave generators in the direction of conveyance of said conveyor and at least a sensor for detecting the distribution of said ceramic molded products in said drying chamber, and further comprising:

wherein a control device for changing the output of each of said microwave generators is adapted to change the output thereof in accordance with the distribution of said ceramic molded articles in said drying chamber,

wherein a substantially tabular reflector for reflecting the microwave energy is mounted, substantially at a right angle to the direction of conveyance, at one of the forward and rearward end portions of at least some of said rests, the other rests having no tabular reflector mounted thereto, and

wherein each of said microwave generators is adapted to change the output thereof in accordance with the quantity of said ceramic molded articles existing in respective drying areas formed between adjacent ones of said reflectors in said drying chamber.

Claims 2-4. (Canceled).

5. (Original) An apparatus for drying ceramic molded articles according to claim 1,

wherein a radiation port for radiating the microwave energy from each of said microwave generators into said drying chamber is opened to each of the ceiling and the bottom in said drying chamber.

6. (Original) An apparatus for drying ceramic molded articles according to claim 5,

wherein said radiation port is open to each of the two end portions of each of said ceiling and said bottom extending in the direction substantially at right angles to the direction of conveyance.

7. (Original) An apparatus for drying ceramic molded articles according to claim 1,

wherein a radiation port for radiating the microwave energy into said drying chamber from said microwave generators is opened to each of the two lateral side surfaces extending in parallel to the direction of conveyance in said drying chamber.

8. (Original) An apparatus for drying ceramic molded articles according to claim 7,

wherein said radiation port is opened to each of the upper and lower end portions of said two lateral side surfaces.

9. (Original) An apparatus for drying ceramic molded articles according to claim 1,

wherein each of said ceramic molded articles has a honeycombed structure formed with a multiplicity of cells by a plurality of cell walls arranged in honeycomb form.

Claims 10-14 (Canceled).